

JCCD Annual Report

Our mission is to promote wise land use decisions, based upon the capability of the natural resources of Jackson County, through technical assistance and education.



JCCD Activities Summary

2020 was an unprecedented year for our world, nation, community and for JCCD. The pandemic and office shutdowns for the year, offered many challenges to the District, but our staff and Board of Directors stepped up and made the best of an awful situation. The District was able to hold our tree and native plant sale fundraiser in the spring, resulting in the sale of 215 native plants, 22,763 trees and shrubs, including 680 fruit trees and 1350 berry and asparagus plants, to over 300 customers. The sale was postponed into May and several safety measures were taken to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers and customers.

The District usually participates in several educational programs throughout the year, including the Learning Fair, Earth Day in the Park, the Arbor Day Celebration at Potter Park Zoo, Aquatic Invasive Species Blitzes and Project RED (Rural Education Day). JCCD also usually participates in the Jackson County Fair, the Women’s Expo, and JAXPO (business expo). This fiscal year, JCCD was only able to participate in JAXPO in October 2019 as the pandemic made it necessary to cancel almost every scheduled event from March through September.

JCCD staff was able to hold one Adopt-A-Highway collection in September, utilizing only staff and family for the clean-up. The District was also able to hold fall, winter and spring Adopt-A-Stream collections. The spring collection was conducted by an employee and his family, while the other 2 collections were pre-COVID.

The District saw the renewal of the CTAI Engineer, MAEAP, and Hunter Access Program grants, and also continued work on the Invasive Species grant (MIGSP). JCCD also received a \$28,000 Scrap Tire Grant from MEGLE and was able to collect 13,456 scrap passenger tires from Jackson County residents. There were 7 separate clean-ups, with 12 townships participating. Also this year, JCCD expanded the Household Hazardous Waste collection to 4 days instead of the one day collection held in the past. There were just over 200 customers serviced and over 39,000 pounds of HHW collected.

Another service the District provides is equipment rental. The grass-grain drill was rented by 8 customers from May to August to plant 87 acres of native grasses and wildlife habitat in Jackson County, and the tree planter was rented by 2 customers who planted over 1000 trees.

Volunteers are a very important part of the District. This year, 17 volunteers put in approximately 150 hours helping us with various projects, such as the Adopt-A-Stream Program, the tree sale, the scrap tire collection day, and the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event. Their help is always greatly appreciated.



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REVENUES		EXPENSES		EXPENSES (cont'd)	
County Funds:		Program Expenses:		Community Promotion	\$ 548.69
Jackson County	\$ 10,000.00	CTAI	\$ 2,958.68	Misc. Expenses/Fees	\$ 190.13
Recycling Program	\$ 31,361.96	MAEAP	\$ 12,805.97	Organization Activities:	
Adopt-A-Stream	\$ 7,000.00	CISMA	\$ 33,231.53	Drill Maintenance	\$ 116.25
Grant Funds:		HAP (Hunter Access Program)	\$ 519.13	Fees/Dues	\$ 1,025.00
CTAI (Conservation Tech. Assistance)	\$ 71,000.00	Adopt-A-Stream	\$ 2,028.41	Annual Meeting	\$ 2,176.33
MAEAP	\$ 73,500.00	Recycling	\$ 11,308.64	Directors' Expense	\$ 127.70
CISMA Grant	\$ 81,968.64	Tree/Native Plant Sales	\$ 17,957.67	Envirothon	\$ 100.00
CISMA Match	\$ 1,000.00	Earth Day	\$ 2,219.25	<u>Training</u>	<u>\$ 530.61</u>
HAP (Hunter Access Program)	\$ 1,999.65	Office Expenses:		TOTAL EXPENSES	\$319,570.04
Local Sources:		Payroll & Benefits	\$ 204,695.04	NET GAIN	\$ 8,444.32
Earth Day	\$ 2,219.25	Employer Taxes	\$ 15,479.99		
Tree/Native Plant Sales	\$ 40,259.59	Supplies/books/products	\$ 1,573.44		
Equipment Rental	\$ 1,385.00	Website	\$ 100.00		
Meetings/Workshops	\$ 2,200.00	Insurance	\$ 182.78		
General Interest	\$ 91.20	Mileage	\$ 656.35		
Sponsorships	\$ 500.00	Copier Lease	\$ 220.43		
Conservation Products	\$ 2,056.69	Audit	\$ 2,000.00		
<u>Miscellaneous Income</u>	<u>\$ 1,472.38</u>	Bank Charges	\$ 1,207.64		
TOTAL REVENUE	\$328,014.36	COGS	\$ 5,610.38		



Hunter Access Program

JCCD has 1 property currently enrolled in the HAP Program for a total of 300 acres. The Mikelonis property is located in northern Jackson County and Southern Ingham County. This property was very well utilized during the 2020 season with several hunters reporting successful hunts. This property has been renewed



Adopt-A-Stream Program

- ◇ Collection events were held in February, May and September with Bug ID nights being held for both the spring and fall collections.
- ◇ There were eight collection sites within the Upper Grand River Watershed. These sites produced a variety of insects including stoneflies, dragonflies, mayflies and much more.
- ◇ Volunteers contributed 90 hours searching for and identifying the macroinvertebrates.

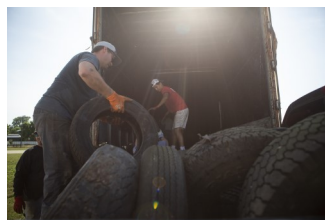




Jackson County Recycles



- ⇒ Updated the annual recycling guide
- ⇒ Thirteen townships and villages teamed up to hold seven scrap tire collections this year. 13,456 total tires were collected county-wide.
- ⇒ The Jackson County Recycles Facebook Page and websites were utilized to increase awareness regarding recycling issues, and to promote recycling events happening in the community. Recycling themed Facebook posts had over 57,000 views this year.
- ⇒ Wrote monthly newsletter articles on topics such as tire recycling, household hazardous waste collections, Earth Day, recycling during the health pandemic, local recycling issues, promoting Recycle, MI, promoting the JCCD Recycling Guide, fall composting, and recycling during the holidays.
- ⇒ The 2020 Earth Day Celebration in the Park was scheduled for April 25th. Unfortunately, this event was canceled due to the ongoing health pandemic.



Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events

In 2020, we were able to establish a semi-permanent Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection site thanks to the help of the Jackson County DOT.

We held four collections this year from June through September at the new DOT site.

Changes this year included requiring reservation to participate, charging each customer \$20 to help offset costs, and no longer accepting latex paint.

This year we:

- Served 209 Jackson County residents
- Collected 39,846 pounds of HHW
- Partnered with Recycling Jackson to collect E-waste at our August event

Scrap Tire Collections

TIRES COLLECTED:

- 1,888 (Grass Lake, Norvell, Napoleon)
- 3,264 (Tompkins, Rives, Henrietta)
- 1,564 (Hanover, Concord Pulaski)
- 2,960 (County-wide)
- 890 (Leoni)
- 1,970 (Springport)
- 920 (Sandstone)

2020 MAEAP Farm of the Year

We are pleased to announce that the 2020 MAEAP Farm of the Year award goes to Drumhiller Farms. Nathan and Allyson Drumhiller, along with their five children operate the 125 acre, 60 head grass-fed beef cattle farm in northwest Jackson County. Environmental stewardship and sustainability are top priorities for the family. By implementing rotational grazing practices, the animals are grass-fed from start to finish, and manure is naturally spread across the pastures retuning the nutrients right back to where they came from, decreasing the need for synthetic fertilizers. For more information on the farm and the family visit:

www.drumhillerfarms.com



Frost-free watering facility for cattle (above), 1600 trees planted in EQIP contract (below)



Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI)

by Alana Helin, CTAI Engineer

The Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI) program is a partnership between the Jackson County Conservation District (JCCD), the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), and the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that aims to promote good stewardship of our land and waters by providing technical assistance to local landowners that want to address natural resource concerns on their property.

During fiscal year 2020, I made over 40 site visits and provided technical assistance for conservation practices on 25+ farms across Jackson and 7 other counties in Southeast Michigan. These practices address resource concerns related to soil erosion, soil and water contamination, animal waste storage, livestock drinking water supply, fuel storage, and wetland restoration. Over this past year, I gained significant experience in construction inspection, particularly related to concrete flatwork. I was also able to continue providing guidance and informal training, primarily regarding stockwater systems, to other staff in the region.

This work resulted in approximately \$234,000 of proposed funding for conservation practices, almost \$207,000 of which was approved and contracted in Jackson county. While only two practices were certified in FY2020 for just over \$6,000, I was able to deliver designs to more than 10 landowners – the majority of which are expected to



Before (above) and after (below) implementing heavy use area protection practices for erosion control



complete construction and be certified for payments in the coming weeks, while a few opted to postpone simple implementation. Due to the number of newly added contracts and recently delivered designs in 2020 plus the current interest in 2021 applications, fiscal year 2021 is on track to be my busiest and most productive year yet.

In addition to planning, designing, and inspecting the practices listed above, I participated in JCCD events such as the annual tree sale, the household hazardous waste and tire collections, Adopt-A-Stream, and Adopt-A-Highway.



Manure Dry Stacking Storage Facility (during final concrete pour, and after wall installation) - allows storage of animal waste during winter months, eliminating need for winter spreading thus reducing runoff contamination



Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)



This year was a challenging year for the MAEAP program as our verifications and farm visits were put on hold for a few months while safety protocols were put in place for conducting on farm visits. Even with everything that happened we were still able to complete over 75 farm visits, 28 on farm risk assessments resulting in 11 verifications and 262 environmental risk reductions. We were also able to partner with MSU Extension on a pesticide exam review session before the pandemic took over. This year we spent \$3,000 in cost share money towards practices like soil sampling, well water testing, and spill kits to help local farms work towards MAEAP verification. One highlight this year was having the first verifications in Southeast Michigan after MDARD re-authorized staff to complete on site farm visits. We look forward to returning to some sort of "normal" next year and increasing the overall participation of the program.



“Even with everything that happened we were still able to complete over 75 farm visits, 28 on farm risk assessments resulting in 11 verifications and 262 environmental risk reductions.”

Welcome to JCCD’s New Program Manager

JCCD welcomed Jim Bales as the new Program Manager in February, 2020.

“Hi! My name is Jim Bales and I am the new Program Manager at the Jackson County Conservation District. I grew up hunting and fishing in Ohio and those hobbies led to an education and career focused on spending time outdoors and protecting natural resources and the environment. I attended Bowling Green State University and graduated with a B.S. in Environmental Science and an M.S. in Aquatic Ecology. I traveled a bit in my early career, working as a Fisheries Observer in Alaska and Hawaii, a Park Ranger in Utah, and a Biological Technician in Glacier Bay National Park, before settling in as a Biologist for 10 years with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I am excited for this opportunity with JCCD to work as the Recycling Coordinator, the Adopt-A-Stream and Hunter Access Program manager, and to organize the Annual Earth Day Celebration in the Park.”





United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

By Jeff Lolkus, Jackson County District Conservationist

Despite the challenges of 2020, NRCS was fortunate to continue operating with relatively little disruption to our programs and services. And although there were some delays and headaches as we adjusted to working more remotely, overall we had one of our most busy and productive seasons to date.

A snapshot of this year's highlights:

- Over 60 conservation practices were completed this year with funding through the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This included 34 acres of invasive brush removal, over 1,650 acres of cover crops, and 3.5 miles of fencing! In total, some \$210,000 of EQIP cost-share assisted 25 participants across Jackson County.
- New applications in 2020 for EQIP funding resulted in 15 contracts for over \$440,000. These contracts will implement a wide range of practices on pastureland, cropland, forestland, and farmsteads.
- Over 3,600 acres were enrolled in the NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). This program provides annual payments to support farmers maintaining high-level conservation-based systems.
- An offer was accepted to restore 161 acres of wetland habitat through the NRCS Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE) program. The site, a degraded wetland located along the Portage Drain, was identified as having high restoration potential and will be protected through a permanent conservation easement. Construction is expected over the next 2 years and will utilize shallow water enhancements, tile breaks, and ditch plugs to restore natural hydrology as well as tree plantings to establish native plant communities.
- The Farm Service Agency enrolled 8 participants in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to provide upland habitat for pollinators and ground-nesting birds. Native prairie habitat comprised of a diverse mix of grasses and wildflowers will be established and maintained for a 10-year term on over 200 acres!
- In total, these conservation programs impact thousands of acres county-wide and represent a federal investment of over \$1.3M.


These conservation initiatives would not be possible without the dedicated efforts of our local partners, farmers, and landholders. Thanks for all you do to support us and the land!



Jackson, Lenawee and Washtenaw Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area



The JLW CISMA has completed 2.5+ years of invasive species education, outreach, survey and management activities in the tri-county region! Funding from the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program allowed us to assist folks by providing free equipment rentals, perform free site visits and initiate our red swamp crayfish monitoring program. While covid-19 had us paused, we definitely were not out for the count! While this was the year we worked from home, we were able to connect via virtual meetings and seminars, developed outreach materials for teachers and parents, and performed fieldwork. A summary of our work and milestones achieved this year are listed below!

Social Media Reach		
	Posts (#)	*Passive Impressions
Facebook	161	36,095
Twitter	118	35,287
Instagram	63	3620

** Passive impressions are number of people who have been exposed to posts*

-  @JLWCISMA
-  @JLW_CISMA
-  @JLW_CISMA

www.jlwcisma.weebly.com

Education & Outreach

- 64 outreach opportunities
- 287 people directly engaged
- In person site visits, virtual meetings, seminars ...
- Held a workshop for landscapers and park staff



Survey & Treatment

- 59.6 acres surveyed and 35 acres treated by JLW CISMA
- Surveyed for European frog-bit, red swamp crayfish, Japanese knotweed etc.
- Collaborated on an oak wilt project with private residents and DNR on land adjacent to state park

Future Activities

- Monitor for Japanese stiltgrass at Watkins Lake State Park and County Preserve
- Survey for Frog-bit, mile-a-minute weed, and Red swamp crayfish
- Apply for MISGP and other grants



Red Swamp Crayfish

- Started our red swamp crayfish monitoring program
- Two locations (Cascades Park and Pittsfield Township) and 20+ traps
- None found so far, but we happily found native northern crayfish!

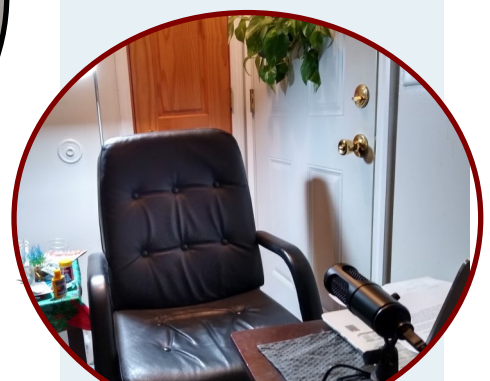


Is your organization interested in becoming a JLW CISMA partner?

Do you need help?

Contact Dr. Shikha Singh at shikha.singh@macd.org

or (517) 395 - 2089



New Member Elected to JCCD Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jill Yoxheimer.....Chairperson
Steve Law.....Vice-Chairman
Steve Noble.....Treasurer
Greg Noble.....Member
Jim Stovall.....Member

STAFF

Lori Fitzgibbons.....District Manager
Jeremiah Swain.....MAEAP Tech
Shikha Singh.....CISMA Manager
Alana Helin.....CTAI Engineer
Jim Bales.....Program Manager
Jeff Lolkus...NRCS District Conservationist

Steve Law has been involved with Conservation Districts since 1983 when he began work with the USDA Soil Conservation Service in Bay County Michigan. Throughout his 33 year career he has assisted Conservation Districts in Hillsdale, Missaukee, Ingham and Clinton Counties in the building of the local conservation programs and District capacity. From 2009 to 2014 he coordinated the Environmental Quality Incentive Program for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Michigan. Since his retirement in 2014, Steve has volunteered time with the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts as the Capacity Programs Manager for 75 member Conservation Districts, and is one of 3 instructors providing Conservation District Director training throughout Michigan.



Steve has a B.S. degree in Crop and Soil Sciences from Michigan State University and is involved in a family farm operation near Rives Junction. He also serves as the Vice President of Customer Development for SWRT Solutions LLC, a startup agriculture related business.

Jackson County Conservation District

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